



# *Milwaukee County*

Supervisor Elizabeth M. Coggs

Chair, Finance & Audit Committee

Chair, Task Force on Work Reform for Men

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## **MILWAUKEE COUNTY IN DIRE NEED OF FEDERAL STIMULUS SUPPORT**

*Sup. Coggs supports federal stimulus to put residents back to work and enrich the community*

**Milwaukee, WI** – Milwaukee County Supervisor Elizabeth M. Coggs, Chairperson of the County Board's Finance & Audit Committee and the Work Reform for Men Task Force, is reacting to the County Executive's continued refusal to seek potential federal economic stimulus funds for Milwaukee County.

"I enthusiastically support submitting shovel-ready projects to the federal government as Milwaukee County seeks funding as part of the upcoming federal economic stimulus package from President-Elect Barack Obama. In light of the County Executive's lack of interest, and on behalf of Milwaukee County residents, I am working with Board Chairman Lee Holloway to advance a resolution establishing our position in favor of this funding," Supervisor Coggs said. "In my view, the neighborhoods I represent have been in a recession for many years. We need to identify and seek funding for projects that will enrich our community for generations as well as put unemployed individuals back to work."

Supervisor Coggs believes that the upcoming federal stimulus will be similar to the Work Progress Administration (WPA) initiatives launched by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1935, when nearly every community in the United States had a park, bridge, or school constructed by the federal government. "No more than 70 years later, I believe Milwaukee County again has numerous capital and infrastructure improvement projects that could be funded by the federal government, creating jobs and lasting value right here in our backyard," Supervisor Coggs added.

The Task Force on Work Reform for Men, chaired by Supervisor Coggs, is aggressively exploring new methods to employ men of color in Milwaukee County. The Task Force is also working with the State of Wisconsin, the YWCA and other community-based organizations to create and maintain jobs for African-American and Hispanic men living in Milwaukee County. The Task Force is attempting to address the following problems:

- The incarceration rate for African-Americans in Wisconsin is more than 10 times the rate for whites, higher than any other state. African-Americans make up only 5.7% of Wisconsin's total population but account for 38.8% of the State's incarcerated population.
- The poverty rate for African-American and Hispanic males in Milwaukee County is four times the rate of white males.
- As a catalyst to building strong families and economic growth, it is reasonable that more emphasis be placed on males as heads of households in order to become productive tax-paying citizens within Milwaukee County.

Upcoming events organized by the Task Force include a job fair at 9:00 a.m. on January 29<sup>th</sup> at the Silver Spring Neighborhood Center and part two of the "We Have Got To Do Something Radical" Milwaukee County Crisis Roundtable Forum, scheduled for 10:00 a.m. on January 31<sup>st</sup> at the Dr. Martin Luther King Community Center.

The next meeting of the Work Reform for Men Task Force is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. on Friday, January 9<sup>th</sup> at the Dr. Martin Luther King Community Center.

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